

REMARKS

We have amended the claims to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the invention. Upon entering the amendments presented herein, claims 1-5, 6, 8, and 10-14 will be pending in this application.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-6, 8, and 10-14 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over WO 01/52106 A2 to Gal.

Gal does not perform the step of “storing event information about each of a plurality of events, wherein the event information for each of the plurality of events includes one or more corresponding invitee selection criteria store.” The Examiner appears to believe otherwise and in support of his contention he directs our attention to page 8, line 11, which reads as follows:

The user creates a message and provides profile information of the recipients of the message. For example, if the profile information “photography” is provided, the message is sent to people whose hobby is photography.

This only refers to profile information for the recipients which might arguably correspond to the member information of claim 1 but it says nothing about storing event information of the type that is required by claim 1. That is, Gal does not store event information which is used for “comparing the stored event information and the stored member information to identify all matches between the stored event information and the stored member information,” as required by claim 1 as now amended.

In the Gal system, at least some of the invitations which a sender wants to send to appropriate recipients include event information and a database is created that lists invitations for each user (see Fig. 4). So, Gal does have a database that stores event information. However, that database does not correspond to the stored event information of claim 1. Gal does not compare his stored event information to stored member information “to identify all matches between the stored event information and the stored member information,” as recited in claim 1 as now amended. Rather, Gal simply collects and stores for later presentation all matches that occur as invitations are received.

A key aspect of the present claimed invention is recited within the following language found in claim 1:

...storing match information about all of the identified matches, wherein for each of at least some of the members among the plurality of members the stored match information identifies multiple events among the plurality of events that were detected for that member;

...sending an electronic invitation message to the electronic mailbox of each member of the plurality of members for which matches are identified in the stored match information, wherein each electronic invitation message invites its corresponding recipient to all of the events for which matches were detected for that corresponding recipient

This means that the present invention operates in the following way. It stores event information about each of a plurality of events and member information about each of a plurality of members (i.e., it collects that information) and then it compares the two sets of stored information to identify matches. The matches indicate to which members invitations are to be sent and the stored match information identifies all users for whom matches occurred and it identifies all matches for each user. So, when invitations are sent out to the members, each of the emails that is sent will include all matches for that particular member, meaning that at least some of the users will receive emails with multiple invitations within the single email. That is, the present invention consolidates multiple invitations into one email. Thus, the recipient will not be inundated by a stream of individual email invitations each for a different event.

Gal's system provides a way of notifying users or sending emails to users without disclosing their names or email addresses or other contact information, but it does not operate in the way that is required by the present claims. Gal's system provides two notification mechanisms. One mechanism involves saving the invitations so that they can be presented to the user when he accesses the website using his browser application. The second mechanism involves sending emails per event to all users for which matches are detected for that event (see page 5). It operates by using the profile information for an event to search a database 30 of users to obtain a list of recipients. Then a message is provided to the recipient computers 32, 34 and 36 for that event (see page 3 lines 12-15).

This second mechanism is the one that is the most similar to what is being claimed but it is different in an important way. Gal does not collect all matches for a plurality of events before

sending the emails. Indeed, Gal does not disclose or even suggest consolidating multiple invitations within a single email. It is clear that Gal's approach is to send emails per event especially in view of his explanation of the advantages of his web page notification approach over his email notification approach. He notes:

The advantage of the message with the dynamically created web page rather than a traditional email type message is that the messages are not considered as intrusive by the recipient since the recipient only needs to see the invitations when they go to the dynamically created web page. The messages don't clog up the recipient's work or hone E-mail system. (page 6, lines 2-6).

If he consolidated invitations for multiple events into a single email, he would not be concerned about clogging the recipient's E-mail system. It is only because he sends multiple emails to a recipient, one for each event for which a match is detected that he needs to be concerned about clogging the recipient's email system.

For the reasons stated above, we believe that the claims are in condition for allowance and therefore ask the Examiner to allow them to issue.

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Respectfully submitted,

Dated: December 14, 2007



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